# *What Journalists Ask When Channels Are Blocked: A Topic Modeling of Requests on Education via Brazil's Freedom of Information Act Under Bolsonaro's Administration*

Cristian Edel Weiss, Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences, Germany

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**Abstract**
This research examines how the hostile policy of the extreme right-wing Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro (2019-2023) towards the critical journalism has affected the access to public information by journalists in education. An exploratory data analysis was performed on the public database of requests of the Brazilian Freedom of Information Act (LAI). The years 2019 and 2020 (first half of the Bolsonaro term) had the highest number of requests, mainly addressed to education. Those findings guided the topic modeling with the Top2Vec technique, performed on the corpus of the 854 requests for information submitted by journalists and addressed to education, to generate clusters of words that synthesized the subjects of the requests. Semi-structured interviews with three journalists, experts in LAI and education, helped to shed additional light on the topics. The results demonstrated that the journalists acted as watchdogs of public administration, questioning fraud in racial quotas in universities, defaults in student financing, and the implementation of military schools. These issues were directly linked to the scandals of ministers of Education and the outcomes suggested that, due to the government's resistance to responding to journalists, LAI remained as valuable resource for them. Although Bolsonaro's term has been marked by lack of transparency in traditional channels (active transparency), no significant evidence was found that passive transparency, within the scope of the LAI and education, has been affected.

Keywords: Freedom of Information, Right to Information, Access to Information, Social Accountability, Watchdog Journalism, Transparency, FOI, LAI, Open Government

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## Introduction

In a government accused of being non-transparent and aggressive towards critical journalism, to what extent can access to information, within the scope of freedom of information laws[1], be affected? Moreover, to overcome such limitations, what kind of information do journalists request? I examine the Brazilian federal government's Law on Access to Information (LAI)[2] database, focus on the first two years of Jair Bolsonaro's administration (2019-2022) and the requests submitted by journalists to the Ministry of Education. The purpose is to identify what kind of information journalists demand when traditional channels are constrained and what implications Bolsonaro's transparency policy had on open government procedures.

The Brazilian LAI, approved in 2011, is an instrument that allows citizens to request any information from the executive, legislative and judicial branches. The law reached 10 years in 2022, during Bolsonaro's administration, accused by journalists and scholars of being anti-transparent and aggressive towards the critical press (Ozawa et al., 2024; Da Silva et al., 2024; Pinho, 2022; Brembatti, 2022; Hunter & Power, 2019).

Few studies have focused on qualitatively analyzing the large corpus of citizen requests for information around the world (Berliner et al., 2018; Sharma et al., 2022). Scarcer are studies on requests made by journalists (Gonçalves et al., 2019) and those focusing on Brazilian law since the Bolsonaro administration (Ferracioli & Marques, 2020). As for exploratory research, I haven't postulated any hypotheses in advance. Due to the claims that Bolsonaro's administration is anti-transparent, I expect that more rejections will be found and that journalists interviewed will have the perception that the implementation of LAI worsened under his Presidency.

I conducted a mixed methods study in three stages: exploratory analysis of the LAI database, topic modeling and semi-structured interviews with journalists. The results demonstrated that part of the information requested by journalists from the Ministry of Education was related to scandals involving departments and ministers. The journalists interviewed also revealed that the law was fundamental for obtaining information when traditional channels are blocked.

Considering the concept of open government and passive and active transparency proposed by Meijer (2013), I argue that although there is evidence that Jair Bolsonaro's government and its education ministers have failed in active transparency processes, there is not enough proof within the scope of the LAI that it has also failed in passive transparency in this area of government. Journalists unable to obtain information related to the scandals in the Ministry of Education through traditional channels turned to the LAI as an essential source of information to cover the issues.

## Factual Context: Bolsonaro's Attitudes Towards Critical Media

Throughout Bolsonaro's administration (2019 - 2022), many questions from journalists have gone unanswered. Deforestation in the Amazon, mining on indigenous lands, diplomatic relations with far-right leaders, disastrous handling of the pandemic, scandals in education and spending by the Presidency of the Republic are some examples (Pinho, 2022; Hunter & Power, 2019; Pontes & Weiss, 2019, Lupion & Weiss, 2019).

[1] Commonly referred to as the Freedom of Information, Access to Information or Right to Information laws (Worthy, 2020; Berliner, 2014).
[2] In Portuguese: *Lei de Acesso à Informação* (LAI).

Bolsonaro made use of the 100-year secrecy (provided by the Freedom of Information law for cases involving personal data of no public interest) to enact 413 confidentiality orders, preventing access to the list of visitors and lobbyists to the presidential office, documents about the president's health or disciplinary proceedings against allies (Sobrinho, 2023; Coraccini, 2021).

The president was aggressive towards the critical press, attacking journalists on social media and refusing to give interviews (Pinho, 2022). His attitude was reflected in the World Press Freedom Index (RSF, 2023). Brazil was in 102nd place in 2018, a year before Bolsonaro took office. In 2021, it fell to 111th.

### *Effects of Bolsonaro's Policy on Education*

Bolsonaro's behavior towards the press was replicated by his subordinates (Hunter & Power, 2019) and Education was one of the most affected fields. Five ministers passed through the ministry in four years. The most controversial one was Abraham Weintraub, part of the so-called ideological wing of the government. On Twitter and in public speeches, Weintraub attacked political opponents and the press. Shortly after taking office, in April 2019, he announced budget cuts for federal universities. When questioned by the press, Weintraub said that "Universities that, instead of trying to improve academic performance, are making a racket, will have their funding cut" (Zero Hora, 2019). That month, Bolsonaro announced a budget cut in humanities courses, such as Philosophy and Sociology, to focus on areas that supposedly generate more return to the taxpayer, such as Medicine, Engineering and Veterinary.

In November 2019, several issues involving the National High School Exam (Enem) emerged, such as leaking images of the tests and the bankruptcy of the printing company. But Weintraub refused to give interviews. He also initiated the implementation of civic-military schools. In one episode, the minister argued that those who study at these schools have a right-wing political alignment (Estadao, 2020).

The minister also tried to interfere in the choice of presidents of 17 federal universities and four federal institutes, who are elected by the academic community, but Congress stopped him (Bergamo, 2019). He also revoked the ordinance that guaranteed reservation of positions (social and ethnic quotas), for black, indigenous and disabled students in master's and doctoral courses at federal universities. That year, several universities also registered irregularities, in which white students defrauded records to occupy higher education places reserved for social and ethnic minorities.

Weintraub was fired in June 2020. Even after his departure, the controversies continued. To be able to enter the United States with the health restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Weintraub used his diplomatic passport as Minister of Education, two days after leaving office (Lis, 2020).

The evangelical pastor Milton Ribeiro replace Weintraub as Minister of Education, with a conservative agenda. In his administration, 37 employees of INEP (Brazilian National Institute of Educational Studies and Investigations) resigned, alleging moral harassment. In February 2022, 33 entities linked to education denounced the disappearance of information from the School Census microdata, released annually by INEP. The government contended

that the data was suppressed to comply with the General Law on Protection of Personal Data, which had entered into force.

Ribeiro was arrested on June 22, 2022, days after he was fired, over allegations of corruption in the Ministry of Education (Reuters, 2022). The Federal Police discovered a clandestine office within the ministry, occupied by pastors who charged bribes to distribute funds to mayors. Ribeiro was replaced by Victor Godoy, who stayed away from controversies.

### *The Freedom of Information Act*

During the 2000s, discussions on transparent government became more popular in developing countries (Malena, 2004; Ackerman, 2006; Fung, 2013). In Brazil, the first bill of an access to information law was presented in the National Congress in 2003 (Gomes et al., 2022), but the Freedom of Information Act (*Lei de Acesso à Informação - LAI, 2011*) was passed only in November 2011 (Berthier, 2023).

Every citizen may request public information for free from the federal, state or municipal government, legislative and judicial branches. Authorities have up to 20 days to respond, which can be extended to 10 days. If the request is denied, the requester may appeal. Since 2012, more than 1.2 million requests for information have been made (CGU, 2023).

The norm also abolished the eternal secrecy of documents and defines the maximum confidentiality period: 5, 15 or 25 years. The Office of the Comptroller General (CGU) monitors the application of the law, acting as an ombudsman of the federal government. The Public Prosecutor's Office also plays a role in pressuring the government to respond to requests.

## Theoretical Background

### *Watchdog Journalism as a Player of Social Accountability*

LAI provided support for journalists to exercise their monitoring role through critical and investigative reporting. Literature defines this stance as *watchdog journalism*: when reporters focus on strengthening the accountability of those in power, the free press as the Fourth Estate (Ceva & Mokrosinska, 2022; Hellmueller et al., 2016; Norris, 2014; Hanitzsch, 2011; Feldstein, 2006; Waisbord, 2000; Schultz, 1998).

Since early 2000s, authors suggested civic engagement as a solution to the crisis of states and markets in developing countries, based on the premise that citizens would adopt an active stance to get to know their rights and demand solutions from those in power (Vloeberghs & Bergh, 2024; Fung et al., 2021; Hegre et al., 2020; Grandvoinnet et al., 2015; Gaventa & McGee, 2013; Rodan & Hughes, 2012; Ackerman, 2005; Malena et al., 2004). This popular involvement is described in literature as *social accountability* (Ackerman, 2005; Malena 2004).

Initiatives can be supported or initiated by the state or citizens and have as a characteristic the inversion of orientation: they work from the bottom up, focused on popular demand (Vloeberghs & Bergh, 2024). Far beyond elections and plebiscites, social accountability includes participation in public policymaking, budget monitoring, and citizen assessment of public service. The players are citizens, communities, civil society and the media, resulting in

public demonstrations, protests, advocacy campaigns, public interest lawsuits and investigative journalism (Malena et al., 2004; Hegre et al., 2020; Fung et al., 2021). In the Brazilian context, Ferracioli and Marques (2020) argue that journalism is relevant to promote public transparency, and the LAI is currently a fundamental tool to achieve it.

***Transparency and Open Government***

Transparency has implications for many disciplines (Alloa, 2018; Alloa & Thomä, 2018; Frank, 2015; Berliner, 2014; Michener & Bersch, 2013; Moser, 2001). The definitions in Political Science encompass the relationship between ruler and ruled, opening the non-visible procedures of an institution to those who are not directly involved (Moser, 2001); making an actor's information available to other actors (Meijer, 2013); or simply "to be open and available for examination and scrutiny" (Schauer, 2011, p. 1343).

Democratic transparency has four principles, according to Fung (2013): availability (within everyone's reach), proportionality (providing information when actions affect citizens), accessibility (understandable language and format) and actionability (individuals can protect themselves or influence organizations). The author also proposes three categories in which contemporary debates are structured, two of them focused on government entities, Information on Demand and Naked Government, and one aimed at the private sector, targeted transparency.

Information on Demand is based on freedom of information laws (Fung, 2013), such as the Brazilian LAI. However, they require civic institutions with a certain degree of maturity to request data, have the analytical capacity to interpret it and make political use of it. The naked government, linked to open government, obliges leaders to act proactively in disseminating data and information.

Meijer (2012) outlines the challenges and progress in open government and describes that the concept encompasses two dimensions: transparency, the vision, and participation, the voice (Figure 1). The transparency branch includes actions of open access to information, whether intentional or even leaked. Participation is the formal or informal actions taken by the government to enable popular engagement in decision-making. The author attests that synergy between transparency and participation is optimal for the open government.

A point for the debate between transparency, open government and the relationship with freedom of information laws is the aspect of intentional access to government information (Figure 1). Meijer et al. (2012) divide this process into two: the passive release of data or documents (freedom of information) or the active release, at the government's own initiative.

The notion of *passive transparency* consists of making government information available (Frank & Oztoprak, 2015; Schauer, 2011) without interpreting it or worrying about whom or for what purpose will be useful. An example is open data, the golden rule being, according to Frank (2015), to make as much available as possible unless there is a reason not to.

*Active transparency*, on the other hand, is a voluntary act of communication by the government to one or more defined audiences (Frank & Oztoprak, 2015), usually with the aim of solving a previously identified problem, selecting the information to be communicated and creating conditions for the public to act on the information received. Holding press

conferences, making data available on the official website or promoting public campaigns are some examples.

Based on these theoretical arguments, my interest in this research is to analyze the impacts of Bolsonaro's administration on active transparency (the relationship with the press to proactively publicize and clarify the government's actions), and passive transparency (through the Freedom of Information Act).

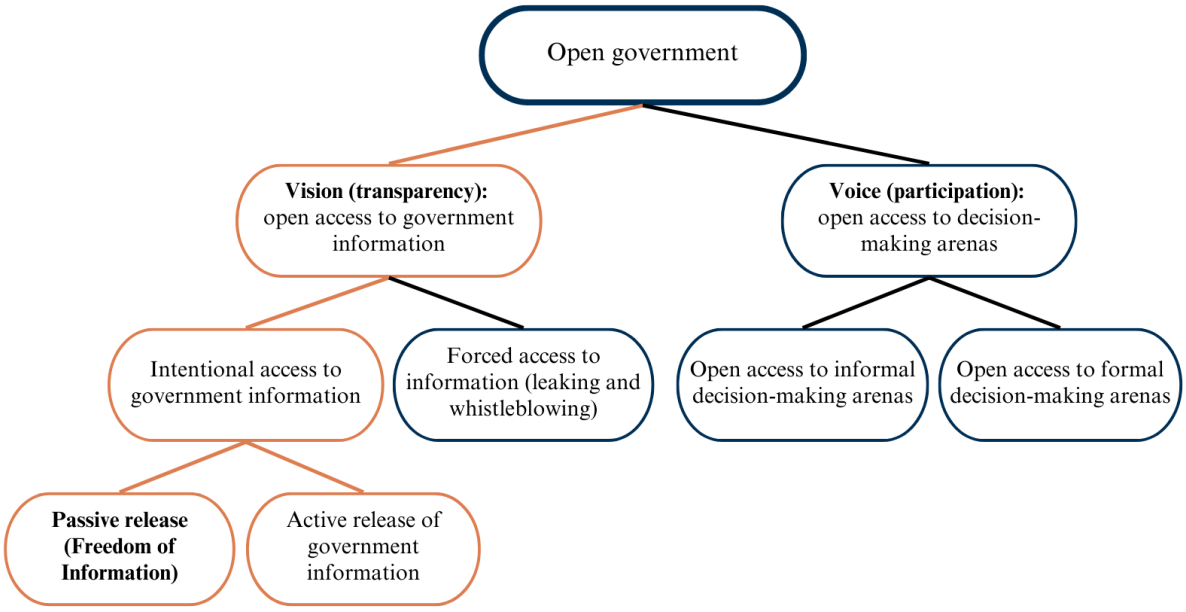


Figure 1: The Links Between Open Government, Transparency and Participation[3]

## Research Design and Methods

This exploratory research aims to understand how the principles of public transparency, specifically the Brazilian Access to Information Act, have been affected in the field of education by a hostile policy towards critical journalism (Ozawa et al., 2024; Pinho, 2022). The following research questions were then proposed:

1. *Is there a topical difference between the declined requests for information through LAI and the requests granted by the government during Bolsonaro's term in specific ministries?*
2. *How does the government's information policy affect watchdog journalism?*
    a. *To what extent have social accountability and transparency been violated due to the denials of LAI requests?*
    b. *How did journalists covering topics whose requests for information were rejected overcome this limitation to write their stories?*

I opted for mixed-methods research, quantitative and qualitative (Bryman, 2012). This approach is appropriate due to the purposes of the exploratory research, based on the Brazilian federal government's LAI open database (CGU, 2023), with anonymous public records of all requests for information since 2015. Due to the scarce prior knowledge on this

[3] *Note*. Adapted from Meijer et al. (2012, p. 14). I highlight in orange lines the dimensions that encompass freedom of information laws in the context of open government.

database, this inductive approach research had no hypotheses in advance, typical of exploratory studies (Sheppard, 2020).

This study is divided into three stages. I performed an exploratory data analysis (Tukey, 1977) and secondary analysis to define the scope of time and field of government to examine in the next stage. From those results, I submitted the textual data to topic modelling to identify the most recurrent themes in the requests made by journalists[4].

Statistical topic modeling models are useful for summarizing and representing the content of large collections of documents (Mimno et al., 2011), and the subject of each item is not known beforehand (Mattingly, 2022). It is a technique originating from unsupervised machine learning and Natural Language Processing (NLP).

Egger and Yu (2022) clarify that there are several techniques for topic modeling. Among the best known are LDA, NMF, Top2Vec, BERTopic. The authors proposed a framework to compare the advantages and disadvantages of each technique. Based on this framework, I opted for the Top2Vec technique, because it can work on very large dataset sizes, automatically generates the number of topics and contains integrated search functions. According to Angelov (2020), the conversion of textual corpora into vectors allows the model to calculate spatial proximity and find similar words, phrases or documents.

Finally, I carried out semi-structured guided interviews with three out of five journalists contacted, who are experts in both the usage of access to information and coverage of education. The selection of the participants fits what Bryman (2012) classifies as convenience sampling. Seventeen questions address five dimensions of the research topic (Appendix B): the interviewee's experience with education and usage of LAI, the perception of LAI as tool for investigative journalism, the perception regarding transparency during Bolsonaro's administration, and strategies to overcome rejections via LAI.

## Results

### *Exploratory Data Analysis*

Between 2015 and 2022, the LAI database registered 690,393 requests for information. A continuous growth in the number of requests is observed from 2015 to 2020. The peaks were observed in 2019 and 2020 (Table 1).

Table 1: Total Requests for Information per Year

| Year | Total |
|---|---|
| 2015 | 71274 |
| 2016 | 81275 |
| 2017 | 90156 |
| 2018 | 91377 |
| 2019 | 96078 |
| 2020 | 111538 |
| 2021 | 79605 |
| 2022 | 69092 |

*Note.* Data collected by author on the 14th of May 2023 from the LAI database (CGU, 2023).

[4] Python script and notebook with technical notes available at https://cristianweiss.com/en/2024/11/topic-modeling-to-analyze-freedom-of-information-law-request/

I tried to verify which areas of government were the most demanded. However, the LAI database brings together 307 government institutions, including ministries, agencies, universities, hospitals and public companies, at different levels of hierarchy. It was necessary to resort to 16 documents, such as laws, decrees, memos, official websites, as of March 2023, to group them within the hierarchy of ministries. With the aggregation, the sum of 307 entities was reduced to 23. Education became the most demanded area, with 25,23 per cent (N=174,075) of requests for information registered between 2015 and 2022 (Table 2).

Table 2: Total Requests by Government Areas From 2015 to 2022

| Thematic areas of government | Total | % |
|---|---|---|
| Education | 174075 | 25,23 |
| Economy | 113381 | 16,43 |
| Mines and Energy | 67786 | 9,82 |
| Health | 61850 | 8,96 |
| Justice and Security | 35506 | 5,15 |
| Citizenship | 31712 | 4,60 |
| Agriculture | 29359 | 4,26 |
| Infrastructure | 27132 | 3,93 |
| Labor and Social Security | 24058 | 3,49 |
| Presidency | 16344 | 2,37 |
| Environment | 16098 | 2,33 |
| Science and Technology | 13855 | 2,01 |
| Defense | 13607 | 1,97 |
| Central Bank | 12591 | 1,82 |
| Communication | 10757 | 1,56 |
| Cities | 10098 | 1,46 |
| Comptroller General of the Union | 8195 | 1,19 |
| Foreign Relations | 6743 | 0,98 |
| Culture | 6049 | 0,88 |
| Human Rights | 5022 | 0,73 |
| Tourism | 2012 | 0,29 |
| Others | 1894 | 0,27 |
| Regional Development | 1844 | 0,27 |
| TOTAL | 689968 | 100 |

*Note.* Data collected by author on the 14th of May 2023 from the LAI database (CGU, 2023).

The next dimension indicates the total number of information requests per year, grouped by type of government decision. I observed that the requests granted also peaked in 2019 and 2020, in total, although proportionally 2020 was the lowest since 2015, due to the high rate of cases considered to be inappropriate requests for information (Table 3).

Table 3: Types of Decision by Year, Total and Proportionally

| Decision | Year | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fully Granted | Total | 52517 | 58644 | 67149 | 67448 | 68961 | 69122 | 54576 | 50973 |
| | % | 73,68 | 72,16 | 74,48 | 73,81 | 71,78 | 61,97 | 68,56 | 73,78 |
| Denied | Total | 4595 | 4538 | 5229 | 6177 | 7550 | 7411 | 5241 | 4857 |
| | % | 6,45 | 5,58 | 5,8 | 6,76 | 7,86 | 6,64 | 6,58 | 7,03 |
| Partially granted | Total | 3628 | 4909 | 3653 | 3906 | 4724 | 5024 | 4698 | 3988 |
| | % | 5,09 | 6,04 | 4,05 | 4,27 | 4,92 | 4,5 | 5,9 | 5,77 |
| Non-existent Information | Total | 2270 | 2537 | 2905 | 3259 | 4198 | 3768 | 3047 | 2442 |
| | % | 3,18 | 3,12 | 3,22 | 3,57 | 4,37 | 3,38 | 3,83 | 3,53 |
| It's not a proper request | Total | 4248 | 5607 | 6189 | 5677 | 4973 | 20699 | 8679 | 3172 |
| | % | 5,96 | 6,9 | 6,86 | 6,21 | 5,18 | 18,56 | 10,9 | 4,59 |
| Duplicate / Repeated Question | Total | 1455 | 1791 | 1907 | 2026 | 2423 | 2548 | 1394 | 1629 |
| | % | 2,04 | 2,2 | 2,12 | 2,22 | 2,52 | 2,28 | 1,75 | 2,36 |
| Authority not competent | Total | 2561 | 3249 | 3124 | 2884 | 3249 | 2966 | 1970 | 2031 |
| | % | 3,59 | 4 | 3,47 | 3,16 | 3,38 | 2,66 | 2,47 | 2,94 |
| TOTAL | Total | 71274 | 81275 | 90156 | 91377 | 96078 | 111538 | 79605 | 69092 |
| | % | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

*Note.* Data collected by author on the 14th of May 2023 from the LAI database (CGU, 2023). I opted to narrow down the analysis in 2019 and 2020, by looking at the data of LAI users: 64.3% of the requests (N=107,688) present identification of the requester's profession.

***Requests Submitted by Journalists.***

Journalists made 6,348 requests for information in the period, 13.45 per cent were addressed to Education (Table 4), followed by Health (10.8 per cent), Justice and Security (10.16 per cent) and Economy (10.03 per cent). Those areas had a fully granted response rate above 60%. In Education, 5.79% of requests were fully denied.

Table 4: Requests Made by Journalists in Different Areas of Government

| Areas | Total Requests | | Government decision on requests submitted by journalists | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Fully Granted | | Denied | | Partially granted | | Other[1] | |
| | *Total* | *%* | *Total* | *%* | *Total* | *%* | *Total* | *%* | *Total* | *%* |
| Education | 854 | 13.45 | 643 | 75.29 | 49 | 5.74 | 74 | 8.67 | 61 | 7.14 |
| Health | 691 | 10.89 | 573 | 82.92 | 49 | 7.09 | 34 | 4.92 | 27 | 3.91 |
| Justice and Security | 645 | 10.16 | 424 | 65.74 | 46 | 7.13 | 83 | 12.87 | 75 | 11.63 |
| Economy | 637 | 10.03 | 394 | 61.85 | 89 | 13.97 | 60 | 9.42 | 77 | 12.09 |
| Presidency | 468 | 7.37 | 238 | 50.85 | 111 | 23.72 | 67 | 14.32 | 25 | 5.34 |
| Defense | 411 | 6.47 | 226 | 54.99 | 58 | 14.11 | 41 | 9.98 | 60 | 14.6 |
| Mines and Energy | 399 | 6.29 | 284 | 71.18 | 39 | 9.77 | 27 | 6.77 | 40 | 10.03 |
| Foreign Relations | 336 | 5.29 | 96 | 28.57 | 169 | 50.3 | 16 | 4.76 | 42 | 12.5 |
| Science and Technology | 333 | 5.25 | 220 | 66.07 | 40 | 12.01 | 22 | 6.61 | 32 | 9.61 |
| Environment | 325 | 5.12 | 256 | 78.77 | 13 | 4 | 18 | 5.54 | 33 | 10.15 |
| Citizenship | 189 | 2.98 | 91 | 48.15 | 16 | 8.47 | 56 | 29.63 | 22 | 11.64 |
| Infrastructure | 187 | 2.95 | 167 | 89.3 | 6 | 3.21 | 6 | 3.21 | 3 | 1.6 |
| Human Rights | 166 | 2.61 | 123 | 74.1 | 11 | 6.63 | 17 | 10.24 | 8 | 4.82 |
| Comptroller General of the Union | 150 | 2.36 | 103 | 68.67 | 11 | 7.33 | 16 | 10.67 | 16 | 10.67 |
| Agriculture | 137 | 2.16 | 97 | 70.8 | 16 | 11.68 | 12 | 8.76 | 9 | 6.57 |
| Labor and Social Security | 99 | 1.56 | 57 | 57.58 | 16 | 16.16 | 12 | 12.12 | 10 | 10.1 |
| Culture | 73 | 1.15 | 48 | 65.75 | 3 | 4.11 | 12 | 16.44 | 9 | 12.33 |
| Cities | 68 | 1.07 | 55 | 80.88 | 1 | 1.47 | 2 | 2.94 | 6 | 8.82 |
| Tourism | 55 | 0.87 | 39 | 70.91 | 3 | 5.45 | 3 | 5.45 | 8 | 14.55 |
| Communication | 50 | 0.79 | 34 | 68 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 18 | 4 | 8 |
| Central Bank | 46 | 0.72 | 32 | 69.57 | 1 | 2.17 | 7 | 15.22 | 3 | 6.52 |
| Others | 18 | 0.28 | 17 | 94.44 | 1 | 5.56 | | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Regional Development | 11 | 0.17 | 11 | 100 | | 0 | | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 6348 | 100 | | | | | | | | |

*Note.* Data collected by author on the 14th of May 2023 from the LAI database (CGU, 2023).

Based on the results, I established the focus of the topic modeling experiment on the requests for information submitted in 2019 and 2020, by journalists, addressed to the Ministry of Education and its subordinate agencies. The selection of education was based on the criterion that this is the field of government most demanded by citizens in general and, specifically, by journalists.

The field of education had 854 requests for information submitted by journalists between 2019 and 2020, of which 75.29 per cent (N=643) were granted by the federal government (Table 4). Among the others, 8.67 per cent (N=74) were partially granted, 5.74 per cent (N=49) were denied, for 4.22 per cent (N=36) the government claimed that there is no information to answer the request, 3.16 per cent (N=27) were denied by the authorities based on the argument that they were duplicated, in 1.87 per cent (N=16) the authority argued that

it was not the competent department to answer the requests, and in 1.05 per cent (N=9) the requests were not properly formulated or did not consist of a clear request for information.

### *Topic Modeling Outcomes*

I carried out the topic modeling experiment considering all requests for information (N=854) submitted by journalists in the field of education between 2019 and 2020. The model resulted in 18 topics, ordered from Topic 0 to Topic 17. A total of 449 single words and 301 bigrams were highlighted by the model. Each topic has an attribute called "topic_sizes", which refers to the number of documents (in this research, individual requests for information) that compose them. By default, Top2Vec orders the topics from highest to lowest, i.e. the one with the highest number of documents to the one with the lowest number.

The results are described in Table 5. The first column received human interpretation labels to qualitatively classify and summarize the subjects most frequently addressed in each topic. The entire table, with word scores, the median scores for each topic and examples of requests found in the original language (Portuguese) are in Appendix A.

The outcomes demonstrated that journalists were concerned about fraud in the racial quota program of public universities; the policy of implementation of military schools across Brazil; cases of possible pesticide poisoning related to a university hospital; students unable to pay their student loan fees; the organization of the National High School Exam (ENEM), as well as the exclusion of specific questions from the exam database due to ideology concerns; budget cuts of federal universities; criteria for the creation of undergraduate medical courses; and the possible misuse of a Brazilian Air Force (FAB) plane by the former Minister of Education, Abraham Weintraub. A notable part of those requests is directly related to the scandals registered during the administration of different ministers in the Ministry of Education. The most notables are described below.

Topic 0 (Table 5) received the label "Suspected poisoning", as 84 of the 99 documents found in this topic refer to a request for information on the number of patients diagnosed with ailments caused by alleged pesticide poisoning in 2019. Journalists request data on cases of patients poisoned by pesticides and ask whether the patients were victims of suicide. A health-related request appears in the corpus of education because it is addressed to university hospitals. The poisoning theme is again highlighted in Topic 15.

Topic 1 was classified as "Military schools" and contains 74 documents about the establishment of this type of school. In document 157 (Appendix A), the professional requests for access to teaching materials such as handouts, books and presentations, which would have been used in training teachers. Topic 8 (Figure 2) also highlights military schools, planned in partnership with the Ministry of Defense, but journalists focused on questioning the Ministry of Education whether reserve or active military personnel will work in these institutions (Appendix C, Excerpt 1).

News articles about the implementation of the military schools published subsequently in the press (Mori, 2019; Alfano, 2020) explicitly mention this data and emphasize that this information could only be obtained through the Freedom of Information Act.

Table 5: Topic Modeling Results

| **Category** | **Topic Number** |
|---|---|
| Suspected poisoning | 0 |
| Military schools | 1 |
| Fraud in racial quotas in universities | 2 |
| National high school exam | 3 |
| Details of the transparency service | 4 |
| Student loan and default rates | 5 |
| Approval of Medicine course | 6 |
| Fraud in racial quotas in universities | 7 |
| Military schools | 8 |
| Fraud in racial quotas in universities | 9 |
| Fraud in private universities | 10 |
| Fraud in racial quotas in universities | 11 |
| Cuts in the university budget | 12 |
| Public tenders for teachers and journalists | 13 |
| Former Minister of Education | 14 |
| Suspected poisoning | 15 |
| Conditions and beds in university hospitals | 16 |
| Fraud in racial quotas in universities | 17 |

*Note.* Categorization of results generated by the Top2Vec model on 854 requests submitted by journalists to the Ministry of Education between 2019 and 2020. See Appendix A for the summarized table (with the first 50 words for each topic) and the link for the full table.

Topics 2, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 17 highlights journalists' concern about fraud in the racial quota policy in undergraduate studies at federal universities. Journalists are interested in the results of administrative investigations and punishment of students who defrauded the system. In Topic 17 presents a request in which the journalist submitted questions regarding fraud to quotas in postgraduate studies, a benefit that was suspended by the then minister Abraham Weintraub was controversial.

Topic 3 was labeled as "National high school exam", because requests for information on the questions of the exam predominated. Document 36 of the topic (Appendix A) presents the request submitted by a journalist who would like to have access to the final report of a commission appointed to review the questions. The journalist's interest coincides with reports at the time on the topic, when the then Minister of Education, the conservative Abraham Weintraub had said that the exam would no longer have "ideological questions", suggesting that left-wing themes were commonly the subject of questions in the test (Campos, 2019).

Topic 10 brings a new theme, labeled “Fraud in private universities”. It presents a request for a list with the name of all private higher education institutions that have already been investigated by the ministry for fraud in the accreditation of courses. The request coincides with the time when a report by Agência Pública (Domenici, 2020) uncovered fraud at a private college. According to the publication, even after the disclose of information that robots were used in place of teachers in remote classes, the ministry did not carry out any inspection.

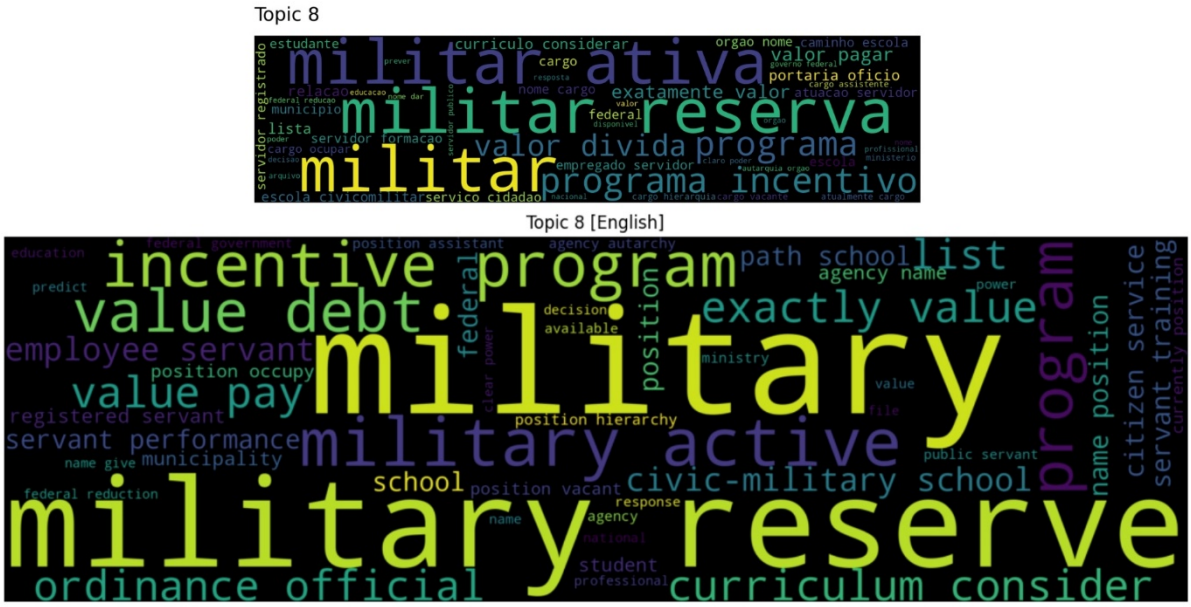


Figure 2: (Top) Topic 8 Generated by Topic Modelling by Top2Vec (covers words about the expansion of military schools in Brazil during the Bolsonaro Government); (Bottom) Translation in English

In Topic 12, journalists demonstrate concern about budget cuts at federal universities. The topic is another one that was controversially addressed by the minister Abraham Weintraub. In document 518 (Appendix A), the journalist asks if there really was a budget reduction, and which areas of the universities will be directly affected.

Topic 14, labeled “Former Minister of Education”, concentrates several requests on random subjects, but one of them deserves attention. The journalist asks whether the story published in the press that former Minister Abraham Weintraub traveled to the United States on a diplomatic passport is confirmed (Lis, 2020). The reporter also requests whether the Brazilian Air Force plane was used for it (Appendix C, Excerpt 2).

***Semi-structured Interviews***

I interviewed three journalists who are experts both in the use of freedom of information law and in covering education. The three reporters had been using the law for at least five years before Bolsonaro became president and publish in large, national media outlets.

The interviews were conducted in Portuguese on 17 and 24 July 2023. The questions are available in Appendix B. Two journalists, who agreed to have their names disclosed, are referred to by their first and last names: Luiz Fernando Toledo, from São Paulo, a freelance reporter for the UOL portal and Piauí magazine; Paulo Saldaña, from São Paulo, an education

reporter for the newspaper Folha de S.Paulo since 2016. The third interviewee works for a TV station in São Paulo, requested anonymity due to security reasons and is referred to as "interviewee 3".

The journalists agreed that the LAI is an essential tool for performing watchdog journalism. Despite Bolsonaro's anti-transparent behavior, they consider that LAI has worked and they have not perceived significant impact on the response to requests compared to previous incumbents. Toledo emphasizes that, in practice, there has been little impact on the operation of the law (Appendix B, Interview 1).

Although traditional channels, such as interviews and contacts via the ministry's press office or spokespeople, have limited access to information during Bolsonaro's administration, journalists said that LAI has become the main resource for obtaining substantial information about education. When requests were rejected, journalists adopted new tactics to overcome the limitations. Saldaña built up relationships with public servants, who anonymously helped him to properly formulate requests, to convince and prevent the authorities from rejecting the request and providing data (Appendix B, Interview 2).

If a request is rejected, the journalists try to appeal to the last administrative instance. Toledo also contacts the Public Prosecutor's Office to put legal pressure on public bodies. Alternatively, the journalists revealed that occasionally their newspapers publish articles to publicly report the ministry's refusal.

Lastly, the interviewees claimed that the Education Ministry may be privileged because it has a history of making data and documents available. The pro-transparency culture of the ministry's civil servants may have protected FOI from political intervention.

## Conclusion

The results demonstrated that the topics representing the requests submitted by journalists are partially related to the scandals and controversial statements by the ministers of Education in Brazil.

In this sense, the research question 1 focused on identifying a topical difference between granted and rejected requests. It was not possible to clearly determine any relevant differences. More tests are recommended. Analyzing the arguments qualitatively, I observed that the limitations due to the pandemic or the generation of additional data were the most justifications made by the government for rejection.

The research question 2 focused on the Bolsonaro government's attitudes towards transparency and how it impacts watchdog journalism. The government's hostile stance towards the critical press, as Pinho (2022) describes, made it difficult to access the most ordinary information. Interviewees revealed that it was difficult to obtain information from the press offices, but responses via LAI occurred normally. It suggests that the law has been little affected by the hostile attitude towards the press. Saldaña revealed in the interview that it is necessary to approach neutral sources within the ministry, such as career civil servants, who are willing to guide reporters to properly ask for information to avoid rejection.

The journalists interviewed presented a consonant discourse that they believe that LAI is a consolidated mechanism, and they have not observed significant impacts on the response

pattern over the years. For them, LAI continues to provide the service they expect. However, they admitted that conventional government channels have worsened relations with the press. Considering the model proposed by Meijer (2012), in which he divides intentional access to information into passive transparency (freedom of information) and active transparency, the active disclosure of government information, I argue that Bolsonaro's administration failed in active transparency strategies in education, but didn't affect passive transparency, in the scope of LAI.

This study has limitations in that it does not claim to be representative, as the convenience sample does not allow for generalizations (Bryman, 2012). Further studies could be conducted based on this research. Journalists covering other fields of government, such as Foreign Affairs or Defense, might have different experiences with the LAI.

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# Appendix A

## Topic Modeling Results

Overall results generated by the *Top2Vec* model on 854 requests for access to information from Brazilian journalists on education between 2019 and 2020.

See the complete table generated by topic modeling, as well as examples of excerpts from submitted requests at the link:

https://cristianweiss.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Appendix-Weiss-Cristian-Edel.pdf

Summarized Topic Modeling Results

| Category | Topic Number | Topic Words |
|---|---|---|
| Suspected poisoning | 0 | ["adult" "attempt" "suspect" "statistic" "poison" "fatal" "register" "achieve" "write" "unknown" "release" "substance" "confirm" "child" "severity" "mark" "victim" "suicide" "agrotoxic" "indigenous" "determine" "age" "poisoning" "doctor" "patient" "term" "list" "case" "adult child" "request" "adult case" "suicide attempt" "fatal case" "analyze" "suspected poisoning" "statistics case" "suicide patient" "attempted case" "severity case" "medical patient" "medical case" "indigenous patient" "fatal severity" "child list" "question patient" "confirm suspect" "age victim" "write request" "list case" "get release"] |
| Military schools | 1 | ["national" "education" "education connect" "elementary education" "minister education" "higher education" "national book" "national school" "municipality" "teaching" "list" "program" "student" "professional academic" "federal" "relationship" "value" "school" "proof" "contract" "elementary school" "civic-military school" "open spreadsheet" "federal reduction" "program incentive" "teaching institution" "higher education" "federal government" "high school" "route school" "open" "federal university" "military" "clear power" "value pay" "power" "exactly value" "value debt" "base" "spreadsheet investigation" "spreadsheet" "give entrant" "give process" "file" "state" "role" "response" "power use" "public" "send open"] |
| Fraud in racial quotas in universities | 2 | ["mechanism" "brown" "control" "removal" "white" "black" "resolution" "planning" "defraud" "conference" "expulsion" "self-declaration" "assessment" "debate" "reprove" "reserve" "accuse" "register" "procedure" "adopt" "person" "compose" "deny" "sense" "member" "treat" "perform" "vacancy" "approve" "existing" "enter" "occupy" "resource" "commission" "creation" "university" "form conference" "create" "resource approve" "creation existing" "form" "semester" "self-declaration perform" "racial procedure" "denounce register" "sense where" "sense commission" "produce" "vacancy reserve" "person approve"] |
| National high school exam | 3 | ["exam" "state" "print exam" "grade" "major grade" "medium grade" "technical grade" "candidate grade" "grade candidate" "state grade" "national" "small quantity" "get quantity" "get" "federal reduction" "education" "federal university" "federal government" "municipality" "value" "collect file" "education" "quantity" "list" "contract" "medium get" "federal" "student" "base protocol" "reinforcement available" "base system" "state maranhao" "program" "consider" "indicate quantity" "base" "national book" "enroll" "public" "national school" "power" "indicate" "answer" "ministry cabinet" "school" "value pay" "education connect" "curriculum consider" "exactly value" "elementary education"] |
| Details of the transparency service | 4 | ["decision" "servant" "regulated" "professional" "ordinance" "manual" "reinforcement" "local" "foresee" "public tender" "body" "service" "ministry" "response" "staff" "available" "file" "public" "position" "use" "name" "operation" "power" "follow" "reinforcement foresee" "specific regulated" "give" "local transparency" "consider" "decision ccpr" "reinforcement available" "regulate manual" "numerical manual" "power to use" "rule law" "ministry folder" "follow sequence" "use production" "public tender" "method to use" "rule law" "ordinance official" "professional academic" "citizen service" "name position" "collect file" "send" "regular operation" "public staff" "personal staff"] |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Student loan and default rates | 5 | ["contract" "contract sign" "value" "federal" "student" "spreadsheet" "education" "open" "base" "precisely value" "value debt" "value pay" "state" "national" "list" "federal reduction" "municipality" "federal government" "federal university" "collect file" "offer an answer" "public sector" "public consultation" "public private" "evidence" "open spreadsheet" "program" "investigation spreadsheet" "education" "indicate" "course" "process" "public servant" "organ name" "institution" "education institution" "consider" "protocol base" "file" "autarchy organ" "correspond receive" "indicate quantity" "student approval" "system base" "state maranhao" "relacao" "receive" "fraud approval" "school" "categorize course"] |
| Approval of Medicine course | 6 | ["correspond receive" "institution both" "relationship consolidate" "categorize course" "institution assess" "course completion" "offer response" "provide law" "denunciation receive" "course medicine" "social admission" "institution government" "decision ccpr" "receive" "local transparency" "fraud admission" "use" "reinforcement provide" "operation" "autarchy organ" "course" "indigenous achieve" "basis" "law provide" "archive" "relationship" "response" "regular operation" "ministry" "use production" "send" "follow" "personnel" "depart budget" "organ name" "method use" "name" "public servant" "depart" "clarify depart" "consider" "public network" "power" "public private" "public consultation" "ordinance" "organ" "age victim" "reinforcement" "give"] |
| Fraud in racial quotas in universities | 7 | ["approval" "result" "apply" "investigate" "establish" "policy" "start" "punishment apply" "investigation result" "investigation" "administrative" "punishment" "investigation process" "process" "administrative process" "result punishment" "involve investigation" "entry" "opening investigation" "investigation establish" "establish" "fraud entry" "start policy" "student approval" "leave" "fraud approval" "investigate fraud" "social admission" "course" "institution" "indicate" "indicate fact" "investigation spreadsheet" "receive" "policy quota" "course completion" "spreadsheet" "government institution" "open" "medicine course" "categorize course" "institution assess" "institution both" "send open" "consolidate relationship" "correspond receive" "student identify" "student mato" "state maranhao" "student interview"] |
| Military schools | 8 | ["military" "military reserve" "military active" "incentive program" "program" "value debt" "exactly value" "value pay" "curriculum consider" "ordinance official" "list" "civic-military school" "employee servant" "servant performance" "servant training" "school" "federal" "name position" "path school" "citizen service" "position" "registered servant" "agency name" "municipality" "student" "position occupy" "position vacant" "currently position" "position hierarchy" "position assistant" "ministry" "agency autarchy" "agency" "power" "response" "available" "name" "federal government" "public servant" "education" "file" "name give" "value" "federal reduction" "clear power" "professional" "predict" "national" "decision"] |
| Fraud in racial quotas in universities | 9 | ["initiation policy" "approval" "set up investigate" "involve investigation" "opening investigation" "initiation" "investigate fraud" "policy quota" "investigation set up" "student approval" "investigate" "policy" "investigation result" "result" "set up" "fraud approval" "investigation" "investigation process" "apply" "punishment apply" "provide admission" "give process" "administrative" "name give" "admission" "punishment" "investigation spreadsheet" "send open" "fraud entry" "send categorize" "result punishment" "process" "send remaining" "send clarify" "student bush" "student identify" "social entry" "administrative process" "interview student" "student reside" "leave" "course completion" "course" "categorize course" " agency name" "course medicine" "institution" "open spreadsheet" "indicate" "racial quota"] |
| Fraud in private universities | 10 | ["enroll" "student enroll" "indicate quantity" "indicate fact" "indicate" "base" "base system" "base protocol" "low quantity" "quantity" "get quantity" "institution" "grade" "student" "grade medium" "gross grade" " mean get" "grade technician" "grade candidate" "course" "state" "candidate grade" "government institution" "state grade" "graduation differentiate" "institution assess" " undergraduate" "post graduate" "undergraduate" "case age" "undergraduate" "get" "institution as much" "follow sequence" "categorize course" "course completion" "course medicine" "consider" "respect graduation" "teaching" "spreadsheet" "education" "test" "curriculum consider" "student reside" "student interview" "student mato" "approval" "follow" "student identify" "student"] |
| Fraud in racial quotas in universities | 11 | ["investigation" "set up" "admission" "admission fraud" "investigate" "result" "punishment" "social admission" "apply" "investigation result" "administrative" "start" "approval" "process" "policy" "involve investigation" "opening investigation" "receive" "government institution" "institution assess" "institution as much" "result punishment" "course" "report receive" "start" "investigation process" "correspond receive" "punish apply" "creation operation" "course completion" "categorize course" "course medicine" "institution" "fraud approval" "student approval" "clarify depart" "regular operation" "investigation start" "from budget" "administrative process" "send" "relationship consolidate" "start investigate" "investigate fraud" "open" "initiation policy" "indicate fact" "graduation post" "graduation differentiate" "attend graduation"] |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Cuts in the university budget | 12 | ["from budget" "clarify from" "competition" "receive" "position hierarchy" "position assistant" "currently position" "correspond receive" "report receive" "vacant position" "from" "name position" "course" "value" "process" "creation operation" "administrative" "open" "institution" "federal" "admission" "punishment" "institution as much" "institution to assess" "social admission" "specific evaluation" "clinical hospital" "university hospital" "use" "fraud admission" "government institution" "establish" "use production" "list" "hospital" "apply" "value to pay" "method to use" "hospital bed" "exact value" "debt value" "operation" "relationship" "citizen service" "base" "municipality" "educational institution" "send" "investigation" "file"] |
| Public tenders for teachers and journalists | 13 | ["position hierarchy" "currently position" "vacant position" "assistant position" "public tender" "name position" "depart budget" "clarify depart" "citizen service" "available" "law provide" "position" "ministry" "service" "use" "decision ccpr" "reinforcement" "decision" "ordinance" "professional" "position occupy" "operation" "provide law" "location" "hospital" "servant" "manual" "regulated" "hospital clinic" "provide" "university hospital" "response" "hospital bed" "organization" "public" "name" "place transparency" "public tender" "specific regulated" "personnel" "file" "power" "ordinance official" "follow" "existing creation" "reinforcement provide" "give" "consider" "specific evaluation" "method use"] |
| Former Minister of Education | 14 | ["elementary school" "higher education" "high school" "teaching institution" "appeal in" "appeal approve" "appeal take" "where appeal" "public" "public staff" "commission direction" "direction where" "personal staff" "public tender" "compose" "teaching" "opinion" "consider" "ordinance" "white" "position take" "local" "decision" "state maranhao" "use production" "perform" "defraud" "self-declaration" "vacancy" "mechanism" "debate" "national" "conference" "reserve" "create" "file" "pardo" "specific evaluation" "register" "answer" "value" "procedure" "method use" "professional" "power" "control" "service" "person" "removal" "planning"] |
| Suspected poisoning | 15 | ["pesticide poisoning" "number poisoning" "pesticide poisoning" "suspected poisoning" "medical patient" "question patient" "send obtain" "average obtain" "add pesticide" "poison pesticide" "pesticide agrotoxic" "obtain quantity" "pesticide case" "medical case" "poisoning" "pesticide" "patient" "poison" "candidate score" "candidate score" "note technician" "indigenous patient" "average score" "gross score" "attempt" "fatal" "suicide" "severity" "mark" "obtain" "release" "medical" "statistic" "adult child" "write" "suspect" "write request" "record" "adult" "unknown" "substance" "determine" "child" "achieve" "mark poison" "poison substance" "mark confirm" "adult case" "confirm" "victim case"] |
| Conditions and beds in university hospitals | 16 | ["hospital bed" "hospital clinic" "university hospital" "hospital" "assistant position" "hierarchical position" "currently position" "vacant position" "law provide" "law term" "public tender" "from budget" "clarify from" "name position" "existing creation" "citizen service" "provide law" "medical patient" "medical case" "indigenous patient" "list" "medical" "suicide" "substance" "indigenous" "suspect" "confirm" "ask" "unknown" "write" "severity" "relationship" "adult" "interrogate patient" "attempt" "child" "determine" "term" "mark" "achieve" "patient" "municipality" "age" "age victim" "produce creation" "release" "relationship consolidate" "indigenous achieve" "statistics" "base"] |
| Fraud in racial quotas in universities | 17 | ["from" "admission" "punishment" "establish" "investigate" "administrative" "apply" "policy" "investigation" "start" "process" "admission fraud" "social admission" "result" "approval" "course" "institution" "clarify start" "punish apply" "send open" "spreadsheet investigation" "start budget" "investigation set up" "open" "set up investigate" "institution as much" "institution assess" "institution government" "investigation process" "receive" "investigation result" "involve investigation" "course completion" "opening investigation" "categorize course" "start policy" "method use" "open spreadsheet" "administrative process" "medical course" "use production" "spreadsheet" "correspond receive" "investigate fraud" "result punishment" "pass evaluate" "relationship consolidate" "denunciation receive" "send" "send categorize"] |

*Note.* Results (first 50 words for each topic) generated by the Top2Vec model on 854 requests for access to information from Brazilian journalists on education between 2019 and 2020.

# Appendix B

## Base Interview Guide for the Guided Interviews

**Experience in Education coverage**

- How long have you been covering education?

**Familiarity with the LAI**

- How long have you used the LAI?
- Why do you use the LAI?
- What education-related information have you requested to the federal government via LAI?
- What has been the outcome of those requests?
- If those requests were not answered by the government, why were they rejected?
- Did those requests result in published stories?
- Do you identify yourself as a journalist when you submit requests?

**LAI as a tool for investigation**

- How was the repercussion of those stories based on LAI requests?
- Usually who is the final target of those requests: the government or companies are also indirectly investigated via LAI?
- Do you believe that LAI is an instrument for investigative journalism? Do you feel you are doing investigative journalism when you submit a request via LAI?
- Are there cases in which a response via LAI is enough to publish a story?

**Perceptions on transparency**

- Has the LAI always worked? Do you notice any change in the pattern of responses to the requests over time?
- Have you ever suffered any kind of pressure because of a request via LAI?
- Particularly regarding the LAI, do you believe that the Bolsonaro government has been more or less transparent than the previous ones?
- Generally speaking, do you believe that the Bolsonaro government has been a more or less transparent government when compared to previous ones?

**Overcoming imposed constraints**

- When your LAI requests were denied, what did you do to gather information and publish the story?

## Excerpt Interview 1:

I'm not saying that it was a friendly government, and they did practically nothing to improve the LAI. Actually, they haven't made any improvements to the LAI. They changed the website to another one that had a lot of problems, but now it's more stable. There haven't been any changes that you could say have made progress; on the contrary, it's stood still and in some cases it's gone backwards. But, in general, the LAI was very well conceived, it has many structures behind it. It's not a politician who makes the decision [about disclose or not a requested information]. For example: 'Bolsonaro authorized the release of this data…'.

## Excerpt Interview 2:

There was a series of indications and demonstrations that the funds were going to allies [Bolsonaro's allied mayors] at the FNDE (National Education Development Fund). And we had to show and prove that there were mayors who were qualified to receive [FNDE funds], but were not receiving the funds. A source inside the FNDE commented that there was a way of requesting exactly that [via FOI]. We submitted the specific request. There was a figure that there were R$400 million [blocked by the ministry to municipalities, in order to favor allies]. [...] So, it was a simple LAI request that provided a great headline and confirmed a situation of privileging payments, of administrative wrongdoing and that has a series of consequences that this information generated, especially in the control agencies. [...] I think that dealing with the LAI has a lot to do with the experience of asking for the right thing. So, very often, a source you talk to will give you the most helpful advice: "look, there's a document X, with such and such a name...". And so we ask for that specific thing.

# Appendix C

Examples of requests for information submitted by journalists to the Ministry of Education between 2019 and 2020, which served as the basis for the model generated by topic modeling.

Excerpt 1:

> Regarding the civic-military schools promised by the Ministry of Education, in partnership with the Ministry of the Defense, I request: 1 - the number of military personnel who will participate in the program, indicating specifically how many are from the reserve and the specific remuneration of each of them 2 - specification of what positions will be offered to these military personnel in each of the schools. If this has not yet been concretely defined, indicate at least which positions will be available. will they also teach, or will they only work in collaboration with the school community? In which positions? 4 - how many military and military reserve personnel are currently trained to work in the classroom? And what is this training? 5 - the full text of all documents, letters and any other form of communication between the departments of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Defense to articulate the program. Considering that the program has already been announced and has already been implemented for this semester, there is no need to talk about preparatory documents, as the decision has already been made. (Topic 10, document 590, see also Appendix A).

Excerpt 2:

> Dear all, I am a journalist at Jovem Pan and I would like to know when the former minister Abraham Weintraub left Brazil, since, according to press reports, he was still the holder of the Ministry when he entered the United States. Did he use a diplomatic passport? Did he use a Brazilian Air Force plane? When did he enter the United States?. (Topic14, document 254, see also Appendix A).

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**Contact email:** email@cristianweiss.com